

# THE BRIEF

December 2019

An electronic update for the legal community providing a brief look at news in Eau Claire County Courts.

## TOP COURT REPORTER TIPS FOR MAKING THE RECORD

An important part of the jobs of the judge and attorneys is to make the record; the court reporter's job is to preserve it. We want you to look good, so here are a few tips from the court reporters:

- ❖ State clearly the appearances and case numbers. CM and CF, for example, sound alike when you are speaking rapidly. Enunciate clearly for accuracy.
- ❖ Have all witnesses state and spell their names. Educate the witness on how to help make a cleaner record, e.g., do not talk over the attorney or the judge, wait until the question is completed before you start answering. Clarify uh-uhs and uh-huhs. When a witness nods or shakes their head, tell them you need a verbal response.
- ❖ The reporter needs to be able to see the mouth of the person speaking. Don't block the view of the court reporter from seeing the person talking.
- ❖ The court reporter will need to interrupt from time to time to ensure an accurate record.
- ❖ Be clear on which exhibit you are referencing or asking to be admitted.
- ❖ Be mindful when reading. It is natural to read much faster than you speak. Providing a copy of a document being read from is helpful. State the full citations for any case law and spell the names. When you provide a written plea agreement to the judge and a courtesy copy to the clerk, a copy for the court reporter would be appreciated.
- ❖ For trials, it is helpful for the reporters to have a witness and exhibit list. During voir dire, always refer to jurors by their name. They are referred to as "THE JUROR" in the transcript, so if you want a record of who you are speaking with, you need to state the names.
- ❖ Unnecessary noise such as clicking pens, loud keyboarding, talking or whispering to others during proceedings are very distracting and inhibit hearing. We are trying to get every word, not just the gist.
- ❖ Finally, SLOW DOWN! We want an accurate record for all parties involved. And you do not want to be on our "list." And, yes, there is a list.

**HAPPY HOLIDAYS!**

**Year's end is neither an end nor a beginning but a going on, with all the wisdom that experience can instill in us. Cheers to a New Year and another chance for us to get it right.**

The Brief. Published monthly. To submit topics or questions: [EauClaire.Info@wicourts.gov](mailto:EauClaire.Info@wicourts.gov)